

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 AID-20 AF-10 USSS-00 SY-10 EB-11 SCA-01 IO-13

M-03 A-01 NEA-10 RSR-01 /170 W

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R 072227Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5127

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 3515

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI CU PFOR PINT PINS

SUBJ: CONTROVERSIAL VISIT FROM CUBA

1. SUMMARY. APPARENTLY UNEXPECTED VISIT OF CUBAN VICE PREMIER CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ AND SENIOR CUBAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER MANUEL PINEIRO LED TO PUBLIC CLASH WITH OPPOSITION POLITICIANS OVER ALLEGED CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN DEATH OF PRES ALLENDEE'S NAVAL AIDE AND TO CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION AS TO REAL MOTIVATION FOR VISIT. END SUMMARY.

2. ON EVENING JULY 30, MUCH TO THE APPARENT SURPRISE OF BOTH CHILEAN GOVT OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS, CUBAN VICE PREMIER CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ AND MAJOR MANUEL PINEIRO, VICE MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND TOP CUBAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICIAL, ARRIVED IN CHILE, ACCOMPANYING THE CHILEAN DELEGATION'S RETURN FROM CUBA'S JULY 26 CELEBRATION. OFFICIAL REASON FOR VISIT WAS TO "ALIGN" CUBAN AND CHILEAN POSITIONS IN UPCOMING ALGERIA CONFERENCE OF NON-ALIGNED STATES. VISIT OCCURRED IN CHILEAN CONTEXT OF INITIATION OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT/GOVT. DIALOGUE, TRUCKERS STRIKE, SHOOTING OF ALLENDE'S NAVAL AID, ARTURO ARAYA, AND GENERAL MILITARY RESTLESSNESS INCLUDING RUMORS OF POSSIBLE MILITARY ENTRANCE INTO CABINET.

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3. ONE OF EARLY AND STILL UNCONFIRMED VERSIONS OF ARAYA MURDER WAS THAT SEVERAL CUBANS WERE INVOLVED (SANTIAGO 3359). CUBAN AMBASSADOR MARIO GARCIA INCHAUSTEGUI ISSUED DENIAL OF ANY CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN AFFAIR AND CLAIMED ALLEGATIONS WERE ATTEMPT TO PROTECT REAL ASSASSINS AND TO HARM CUBA/CHILE RELATIONS; STATEMENT WAS DISTRIBUTED BY PRESIDENTIAL INFORMATION OFFICE (OIR).

4. IN SIMILAR VEIN, RODRIGUEZ TERMED ALLEGATIONS, STEMMING MAINLY FROM PARLIAMENTARIANS OF CONSERVATIVE NATIONAL PARTY, AS "CUNNING ATTACKS" AND "SLANDER" AGAINST CUBA. RODRIGUEZ ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOME WOULD TAKE HIS REMARKS AS INTERVENTION IN CHILEAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, BUT HE CLAIMED EQUAL RIGHT TO REPLY TO UNFOUNDED SLANDER AS CHILEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS HAVE TO MAKE SUCH CHARGES.

5. PN PICKED UP GAUNTLET AND DECLARED THAT BOTH RODRIGUEZ AND GARCIA WERE INDEED INTERFERING IN INTERNAL CHILEAN AFFAIRS AND BOTH SHOULD BE DECLARED PERSONAE NON GRATAE. OPPOSITION PRESS LED BY EL MERCURIO RAN ARTICLES NOTING THAT COVER STORY OF ALGIERS CONFERENCE WAS TOO THIN SINCE RODRIGUEZ HAD MET PUBLICLY ONLY ONCE WITH ALLENDE AND THAT FONMIN LETELIER HAD DEPARTED FOR LIMA MEETING OF ANDEAN PACT. WHAT THEN, ASKED OPPOSITION PRESS, WERE CUBANS REALLY UP TO? SPOTLIGHT THEN FOCUSED ON PINEIRO, WITH QUESTIONS RHETORICALLY ASKED WHAT ATTITUDE OF ALLENDE GOVT MIGHT BE TO VISIT, EVEN ON VACATION, OF US DIRECTOR OF CIA. UP PRESS LED BY COMMUNIST EL SIGLO STRONGLY DEFENDED CUBANS AS TRUE FRIENDS OF CHILE.

6. ACCORDING TO PDC'S LA PRENSA OF AUG 7, RODRIGUEZ RETURNED TO CUBA AUG 4 AND WAS SEEN OFF BY UNDERSEC FONRELS ORLANDINI. NO WORD THAT PINEIRO HAS DEPARTED.

7. COMMENT. THERE ARE CONFLICTING REPORTS AS TO REAL REASON FOR CUBANS' VISIT. ONE VERSION IS THAT CUBANS TOLD ALLENDE AND UP PARTIES TO PREPARE FOR "INEVITABLE" EVENTUAL ARMED SHOWDOWN IN CHILE AND TO REGARD ANY TACTIC SUCH AS DIALOGUE WITH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AS SIMPLY BUYING TIME IN WHICH TO STRENGTHEN UP CAMP.

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